

Annex #3 to IPS Doc. 3345

Exh No. _____

ANNEX No. 3 to
IPS DOCUMENT NO. 3345
(Layton Affidavit)

Reference Admiral Halsey's report on the
Action in the Marshall Islands
(WOTJE and others) on 1 February
1942.

Annex #3 to
IPS Doc. 3345

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIRCRAFT, BATTLE FORCE
U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

Exh No. ____

A16-3/(006)

Flagship

Pearl Harbor, T. H.

S-E-Z/R-Z-T

UNCLASSIFIED

9 Feb. 1942

From: Commander Task Force EIGHT
To: Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet
Subject: Action in the Marshall Islands, 1 Feb. 1942
Reference: (a) U. S. Navy Regulations, Article 712,
(b) My Secret Serial 004 of Jan. 28, 1942,
Operation Order No. 1-42
(c) My Secret Serial 003 of Jan. 28, 1942,
to Commander Task Force SEVENTEEN.
(d) Cincoac Dispatch of January 1942
Enclosure: (A) CO ENTERPRISE report of action on 1
February 1942, with enclosures thereto.

1. The plan of operation embraced in reference
(b) was followed without deviation. The approach to the enemy
area was without incident other than the radar tracking of an
enemy scout a short distance to the southward of the track of
Task Force EIGHT on the afternoon of 31 January (-12). This
is shown on the track chart, part of enclosure (A).

2. The enclosures provide detailed narratives of
the action of the ENTERPRISE Air Group and squadrons in the ob-
jective areas. Information contained herein on the results of
the bombardments of Task Groups 8.1 and 8.3 is based on prelimi-
nary dispatch reports only; more detailed information will be
forwarded as soon as received. Enclosure (A) gives an account
of the bombing attacks on the ENTERPRISE on the afternoon of 1
February. It is hoped that information can be obtained from
vessels in company with the ENTERPRISE at the time which will
more accurately define the location of impacts and the size and
number of bombs dropped. If this hope materializes this informa-
tion will likewise be forwarded as soon as obtained.
* * * *

(b) Shore installations destroyed or damaged:

(1) WOTJE: The entire installation was apparently
destroyed. This includes 2 hangars, fuel
oil tanks, gasoline storage, warehouses,
shops and barracks. Two A. A. batteries
and all coastal defense guns were silenced
or abandoned.

(2) TAROA: Two hangars destroyed, several buildings
hit and afire in industrial area; both

Fuel tanks were ablaze. The radio station on OILET Island destroyed.

- (3) ROI: Two hangars destroyed. Ammunition dump blown up and fuel fire left burning. Radio building demolished. All store and warehouses demolished by explosion resulting from bombing. Fire in town on island east of ROI.
- (4) KWAJALEIN: Large compound received three direct hits.
- (5) GWGEGWE: Four buildings destroyed.
- (c) Enemy planes destroyed.
- (1) ROI: 3 VF (shot down)
6 BSB (destroyed on ground)
1 twin-engined bomber (destroyed on ground).
- (2) KWAJALEIN: 2 PSP (4-engined) destroyed on water.
- (3) WOTJE: None.
- (4) TAROA: 7 VF (shot down)
5 2-engined bombers (on ground)
1 twin-engined bomber (destroyed on ground).
1 VF damaged in air.
5 VF (destroyed on ground)
- (5) At sea: 3 twin-engined bombers (shot down)
1 twin-float single engine monoplane (shot down).
- (d) The above totals include 13 vessels and 35 planes confirmed losses. In addition it is considered that between four and seven ships suffered damage of indeterminate degree, at least two of which (WOTJE) were in a sinking condition, and an indeterminate number of planes destroyed or damaged in the hangars and dispersed parks adjacent to the fields at ROI and TAROA.

20.

Miscellaneous notes on enemy

- (a) Both ROI and TAROA had complete air bases of recent construction. WOTJE also had a new installation. Pilots report TAROA base better equipped than FORD ISLAND.
- (b) AA batteries present on ROI, KWAJALEIN, TAROA, WOTJE, and OILET. Guns of 3", .50 and .30 caliber.
- (c) KWAJALEIN apparently used as submarine base.
- (d) AA fire of umbrella type - apparently not well-controlled.

- (e) Enemy VB of Type 96 or 97 with possibility of "O" being present.
- (f) High degree of maneuverability of enemy VF and good climb but not as fast as F4F's.
- (g) Twin-engined bombers; tactics of bombing and VF attack described elsewhere.
- (h) Apparent reluctance of VB to engage VSB

21. It is my carefully considered opinion that the enemy has been struck an extremely heavy blow in the Mandated Area. The action embraced, to the best of my knowledge, the first instance in history of offensive combat by U. S. carriers. The performance of the ENTERPRISE justifies the highest hopes heretofore held regarding the effectiveness of these vessels when properly employed. This action, likewise, was the first offensive operation by Task Forces of the Pacific Fleet in the current war. The results must speak for themselves. I am proud and grateful for the high privilege of having commanded Task Force EIGHT in these operations.

W. F. HALSEY